

NENNO et al
Serial No. 09/914,179
February 3, 2004

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested.

By way of the amendment instructions above, claims 1-13 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 14-29. Claims 14-17 are cast in independent form, while claims 18-25 are dependent directly or indirectly from each one of such independent claims. Claims 26-29 on the other hand are dependent on the independent claims, while avoiding duplicate claimed subject matter.

Some minor non-substantive clarifying changes have been incorporated into the new claims. Thus, for example, reference numerals have been omitted from the new claims.

Each of the independent claims 14-17 presented herein represent a combination of claim 1 with each of claims 2, 5, 8 and 11, respectively. Each of the dependent claims 18-25 is based on prior dependent claims 3-4, 6-7, 9-10 and 12-13, respectively. Dependent claims 26-29 are substantively based on claims 2, 5, 8 and 11, but are dependent on only those new independent claims which do not specifically define such subject matter.

Therefore, in view of the new claims presented herewith and the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in paragraph 7 on page 4 of the official action dated October 3, 2003, it is believed that all issues outstanding in this application have been rendered moot. As such, early receipt of the official allowance notice is awaited.

Every effort has been made to advance prosecution of this application to issuance. However, should any small matter remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the applicants' undersigned attorney so that the same may be resolved without the need for an additional written action and reply.

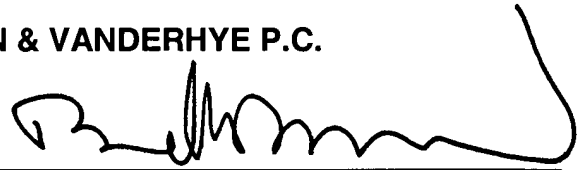
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An early and favorable reply on the merits of this application is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan H. Davidson', written over a horizontal line.

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